

In the claims:

The claims below are changed to read as follows.

*Sub B1
A*

1. (Amended) A method for adapting a general purpose query protocol for use by an industrial control system, the industrial control system including a controller for providing control over an industrial process through at least one control element and at least one monitoring element each coupled to the network via a network I/O device, the controller for providing control via a communication network according to an Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) type of network communication model including a transport layer, and in providing such control the controller communicates with the network I/O devices according to the general purpose query protocol, the method comprising the step of:

a) making a permanent-type connection to the network I/O device for the control element or for the monitoring element based on an analysis of communication transactions between the controller and the control element or the monitoring element;

thereby specializing the general purpose query protocol, which would ordinarily be used in computer-to-computer communications for making ad hoc queries of an external device, to use by the industrial control system in performing frequent communication of control and monitoring information between the controller and the control element or the monitoring element of the industrial control system.

*Sub D3
A2*

4. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the protocol is an open MODBUS/TCP type of protocol.